

the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and two withdrawals which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Novotny, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House agree to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendment of the House to the amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 2642) to provide for the reform and continuation of agricultural and other programs of the Department of Agriculture through fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

The message further announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, and the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House of Representatives to the British-American Interparliamentary Group: Mr. MCINTYRE of North Carolina and Mr. DELANEY of Maryland.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time:

S. 1977. A bill to repeal section 403 of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, relating to an annual adjustment of retired pay for members of the Armed Forces under the age of 62, and to provide an offset.

PETITIONS AND MEMORIALS

POM-193 and POM-194 originally appeared without text in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of Wednesday, January 29, 2014.

POM-193. A resolution adopted by the Senate of the Northern Mariana Commonwealth Legislature petitioning the United States Congress to amend the Radiation Exposure Act of 1990; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 18-04, S1

Whereas, the United States Government and the Atomic Energy Commission together with the United States Armed Forces conducted testing of atomic nuclear weapons on Eniwetok and Bikini Atolls in the Marshall Islands, South Pacific, from 1946 to 1962; and

Whereas, a total of 67 atomic and thermonuclear bombs/devices were detonated with a total yield of 108,492.2 kilotons which resulted in fallout across a wide area around the Marshall Islands in the Pacific; and

Whereas, no less than ten of those detonations yielded between five to ten megatons of radioactive material from the center of the explosion to the height of between 12 to 55 miles into the jet-stream; and

Whereas, on October 31, 1952, Operation Ivy was conducted on Elugelab Island ("Flora") in the Enewetak Atoll, in which the first true thermonuclear hydrogen bomb (a 10.4 megaton device) code name Mike was detonated, destroying the entire island leaving behind a 6,240 feet across and 164 feet deep crater in its aftermath; and

Whereas, in 90 seconds the mushroom cloud climbed to 57,000 feet into the atmosphere and within 30 minutes had stretched 60 miles in diameter with the base of the mushroom head joining the stem of 45,000 feet; and

Whereas, radioactive fallout is the after effect of the detonation of a nuclear bomb where radioactive particles and earth debris, which comprise the mushroom cloud, are released into the atmosphere and remain in the atmosphere for about 24 hours before descending back to earth; and

Whereas, before the descend back to earth, these radioactive particles can be carried through jet-streams in the atmosphere to locations over a thousand miles away from the actual test site and settle into the environment causing multiple health and environmental problems; and

Whereas, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are located approximately 1,230 miles directly west of the test sites; and

Whereas, the radioactive dust particles travelled through the westward flowing jet-streams from the Marshall Islands to Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

Whereas, due to the deleterious effects of the nuclear radiation, on October 5, 1990, the United States Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act ("RECA") which established new programs for persons physically present in areas near the Nevada nuclear test site during atomic testing at the site. Atmospheric testing of atomic devices—important to national security during the darkest days of the "cold war"—ended in 1963 when, under President Kennedy, the United States signed and ratified the limited Test Ban "Treaty". Prior to the Treaty, the United States detonated over 200 atomic devices in the open air in both the South Pacific and in Nevada. The RECA provides compassionate payments to persons with specified diseases who fear that their health were harmed because of fallout from atmospheric atomic testing at the Nevada test site, regardless of whether causation can be scientifically established; and

Whereas, on July 10, 2000, Public Law 106-245, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments of 2000 was passed, adding two new claimant categories, providing for, among other things, additional compensable illnesses, removing certain lifestyle restrictions, and adding additional geographic areas to the "downwinder" claimant category; and

Whereas, although RECA coverage has been expanded, it still does not provide relief to all Americans affected by fallout, particularly residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Territory of Guam; and

Whereas, there is no doubt that the Territory of Guam has received radioactive debris from fallout during the nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific Ocean to such an extent that in March 2004, Congresswoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo spoke before the Committee to Assess the Scientific Information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program to request that they include an assessment of Guam for "downwinders" and ship decontamination as part of their congressionally mandated study; and

Whereas, because the islands in the CNMI are in close proximity to the Territory of

Guam, separated by a scant 30 miles, and both are affected by the same wind, weather and ocean current patterns, it logically follows that radiation which affects the Territory of Guam necessarily affects the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

Whereas, as a result, the Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board ("NSRB") published in 2005 its report entitled "Assessment of the Scientific Information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program"; and

Whereas, because fallout may have been higher for the people outside RECA-designated areas, the NSRB recommended that all residents of the continental US, Alaska, Hawaii, and overseas US territories who have been diagnosed with specific RECA-compensable diseases and who may have been exposed to radiation from U.S. nuclear-weapons testing fallout be compensated; and

Whereas, the United States Congress has the authority to amend RECA to include residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands affected by radiation as eligible "downwinder" claimants; and

Whereas, the failure of the United States Congress to amend RECA in such a way as to compensate affected residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Islands will cause the people of the Commonwealth to bear a disproportionate burden in defending the United States of America; and

Whereas, we, the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, United States of America, humbly request that the Commonwealth be included in RECA with the same criteria that was made for Nevada test site in 1990 for compassionate payments: Now, therefore be it

Resolved, on behalf of the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands by the Eighteen Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, That the United States Congress is hereby respectfully petitioned to declare that all Americans shall be given the same consideration when it comes to compensation for exposure to radiation from U.S. nuclear testing; and be it further

Resolved, That the United States Congress is hereby respectfully petitioned to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990, Public Law 101-426, as amended by Public Law 101-510, 3139 (43 U.S.C. 2210) and Public Law 106-245, to include the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in the jurisdiction "downwinders" covered by the Act; and be it further

Resolved, That the United States Congress is hereby respectfully requested to include the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands similarly as the Territory of Guam and be granted RECA "on site" status; and be it further

Resolved, That the affected population previously and currently in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (those residing who have been exposed to radiation from the Atomic Energy Commission tests in the Marshall Islands) be recognized as being "downwinders" of such test; and be it further

Resolved, That the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall certify, and the Senate Legislative Secretary and the House Clerk shall attest to the adoption of this joint resolution, and thereafter the Senate Clerk shall transmit a certified copy to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States of America; to the Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Patrick J. Leahy, President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate; to the Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader, United States House of Representatives; to the Honorable Mark Chuck Grassley, ranking member,